

February 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

Good afternoon, my name is Robert Larson. I am 62 years old and I can not speak. I can not walk. I am living a wonderful full life. I have cerebral palsy and have been confined to a wheelchair all my life, yet I have traveled to many places, have many friends and I am loved. I am a survivor. I have faced and overcome cancer twice, and have regained my health due to the people I depend on every day. I go to church, I sing, I dance, I enjoy my activities. I have my own room, I have my stereo, my computer, my TV and pictures of all my adventures, friends and loved ones.

I have these things; I am who I am because I have the ability to live like you. I have my home because I am fortunate enough to have my aides, who care about me, help me every minute of every day achieve everything you are able to walk out your door and achieve on your own.

I love my family, my home and those I live with. I love and I am loved by those who come into my home respecting my life and insuring I am fed, bathed and that I get up everyday and contribute to life. I go to work and I help those who need my help.

I am different from you in my ability to do all I do on my own, but I am not different from you in my needs, hopes and dreams.

The major difference is whether I can have my needs met, my hopes achieved, my dreams come true; I rely on you to insure my care is met to the fullest standard as you would expect for yourself or a loved one. You make that decision for me! I do not make it, you do.

My needs may seem to you a great burden, a cost far too much.

I am not a burden, I am not a problem to be dealt with and I can not "get along" with less. The services you are deciding for me are life services. I depend on them to live, to eat and to be healthy. Less will mean I am at serious risk of not having the same given right to a healthy, safe and happy life. Less could mean my life.

You decide if I can continue to live safely in my home. You decide if I will receive the services I need to realize my potential every day, to live an active life and face each day with the proper care I deserve. You decide if when I am sick if there is someone to speak for me. You decide if. Decide well and with the full knowledge that your decision will result in the quality of my life.

Thank you for taking the time and interest in reading my testimony, I ask that you take very good care in deciding the care I will receive, the quality of my life. My life depends on it.

Best regards,

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RWL/ Collynn E. Temple, sister and guardian of Robert Larson